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LAG IN OPEN-PIT COAL MINING IN USSR

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The USSR coal industry has achieved considerable success in developing and mechanizing open-pit mining. Since 1940 this method has increased 270 percent. From 1940 to 1945 it increased 180 percent and accounted for 12.7 percent of all coal mining. However, from 1945 through 1949 the Ministry of the Coal Industry sharply reduced the rate of development of open-pit mining in spite of the fact that this is the most productive and economical method. Labor productivity is three to five times as high in open-pit coal mining as in underground mining and production costs per ton of output are only one-fourth to one-third as much.

One of the chief reasons for the decrease in development of open-pit mining is the extremely long time involved in the construction of new coal pits. For example, Veselovskiy Pit No 1 was under construction from 1943 to 1949 and Volchanskiy Pit No 4, from 1945 to 1949; several pits for which the foundation was laid in 1946 have not yet been put into operation. Time set for the construction of coal mines by the ministry is excessively long, usually 3 or 4 years, but, in some cases 5 or 6 years.

Since the rate of constructing coal pits depends on a number of preliminary operations, considerable attention should be paid to these. Electric power should be supplied, motor roads and railroads constructed, machine shops erected and equipped, and homes for workers and engineering and technical personnel built. Nonfulfillment of these conditions considerably prolongs coal-pit construction time and increases costs. Inadequate supplies of electric power during the construction of Baydakovskiy, Yurkovskiy, and other pits have prevented complete utilization of available excavators, hindred electric locomotive haulage, and interfered with developing mining operations on the required scale. The coal industry should have profited by the rapid-construction experience of such large coal pits as Karaganda No 4 and Volchanskiy No 1, the former of which was constructed in 11 months and the latter in 13.

The equipment and, in particular, the excavators are not exploited at full capacity in open-pit mining. The following table indicates the amount of idleness on the part of excavators in preliminary removal work:

Name of Trust	Coefficient of Exploitation of Machine Time	Idle Time in Percent of: Calendar Time	Working Time
Korkinugol'	77.6	16.5	21.3
Vakhrushevugol'	72.5	20.9	28.8
Volchanskugol'	72.2	30.3	42.0
Raychikhugol'	70.4	38.8	55.2
Karagandauglerazrez	77.7	21.8	28.0
Kirovugol'	66.8	25.2	37.7

The average yearly productivity of excavators engaged in removal work per one-cubic-meter bucket was as follows (in 1,000 cubic meters):

Name of Trust	Productivity
Korkinugol'	194.5
Vakhrushevugol'	229.5
Volchanskugol'	173.0
Raychikhugol'	163.0
Karagandauglerazrez	222.0
Kirovugol'	202.0
Uzbekugol'	111.5

The performance of individual machines varied within wide margins, as can be seen from figures on the productivity of the SE-3 excavator:

Name of Trust	Monthly Productivity per One-Cubic-Meter Bucket (in 1,000 cu m)
Korkinugol'	11.9 - 40.47
Vakhrushevugol'	19.39 - 41.33
Volchanskugol'	14.6 - 30.69
Raychikhugol'	10.27 - 36.60
Karagandauglerazrez	17.84 - 39.01
Kirovugol'	15.76 - 33.62
Uzbekugol'	5.40 - 16.90

Idle time of excavators in actual mining operations is indicated in the following table:

Name of Trust	Coefficient of Exploitation of Machine Time	Idle Time in Percent of: Calendar Time	Working Time
Korkinugol'	75.5	16.1	21.3
Vakhrushevugol'	71.6	26.3	46.7
Volchanskugol'	75.0	39.5	52.7
Raychikhugol'	44.0	38.0	85.0
Karagandauglerazrez	74.3	20.0	27.0

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